

Joel Roberts Poinsett to Andrew Jackson, February 9, 1833, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOEL R. POINSETT TO JACKSON.

Private

Charleston, February 9, 1833

My dear Sir, The arrival of Mr. Leigh¹ from Richmond changed the plans of the nullifiers. They did not wish to give an immediate answer to Virginia, which they would have been compelled to do if their convention had been in Session. After much negotiation, they yesterday informed him, that they would assemble the convention directly after the adjournment of Congress, the second Monday in March. Mr. Leigh says he hopes they will listen to the voice of Virginia if the tariff bill passes; but if the bill granting the powers asked for by you should pass and the tariff not be modified he fears they will go on. Mr. Leigh acknowledges, that if they do go on Eastern Virginia will remain neutral and Western Virginia take part against them, so that the Legislature of that State can pledge the State to no course which this state desires it to do. I believe it will be found, that when the Leaders desire to stop, they have not the power to do so. They have raised a storm beyond their power to control. I intend to call the convention of the Union party together as soon as Hamilton issues his proclamation. I shall fix on three days later, so as to see their hand, and determine our course accordingly. It is rumoured, that the British Consul² has assured his friends the nullifiers that he has written to the Commander of B. M. Squadron in the West Indies to send some vessels of war off this harbour in order to protect the persons and property of H. B. M's subjects. Whatever may be the pretext of such a measure, the

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appearance of such a force here would encourage the nullifiers; for their leaders have all along led them to believe, that in a contest

1 Benjamin W. Leigh, who in 1834 was elected U. S. senator to fill the place of William C. Rives, resigned.

2 Henry Ogilby.

with the federal government they would receive the aid of Great Britain. This Consul is a nullifier and if I can detect him in doings as well as sayings I will give you instant information, and think he ought to be deprived of his exequatur.

I transmit you herewith a letter in relation to the Post office in Columbia. That P. M. ought to be dismissed. The Union party recommend Mr. Chapman to be appointed in his place. McLean the mail Contractor deceives the P. M. G. government has not a more determined or more mischeivous enemy. He sported the revolutionary cockade and has I presume volunteered his services to fight against the government which pays him.

All my accounts from the country are cheering. The Union party are decided and firm. They will I believe oppose secession to a man.

I am, Dear Sir, very respectfully